

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 298 186

UD 025 969

TITLE Addressing the Causes of Youth Crime.
INSTITUTION Human Rights Resource Center, San Rafael, CA.
PUB DATE 87
NOTE 34p.
AVAILABLE FROM Human Rights Resource Center, 30 N. San Pedro Road,
Suite #140, San Rafael, CA 94903 (\$9.95).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Reports -
Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Community Programs; Crime; *Crime Prevention;
Dropout Programs; Elementary School Students;
Elementary Secondary Education; High School Students;
Police Community Relationship; *Program Development;
*Program Effectiveness; School Community
Relationship; Violence; Youth; *Youth Programs
IDENTIFIERS California (Marin County); California (Santa Fe
Springs); New York (New York); Partnerships

ABSTRACT

This report comprises papers that discuss how grassroots organizations, police involvement, and partnerships with local government and boards of education can prevent youth from criminal involvement through participation in productive and enjoyable work and activities. The following articles are included: (1) "Police Officers Can 'Prevent' Crime: An Action Plan" (Trish Donahue), which suggests that line officers should work with community organizations to effect change; (2) "Excerpt: Making a Difference: Young People in Community Crime Prevention" (the National Crime Prevention Council), which surveys community crime prevention youth programs across the country; (3) "Addressing Crime: The City of Santa Fe Springs Model" (Antonio A. Lopez and Gustavo Velasco), which offers a model for crime prevention programs for preschool-age children through young adults; (4) "The Campaign for a Healthier Community for Children" (Dorothy Hughes), which describes the organization of a community effort in Marin County, California; (5) "At Close Range: How Community Groups Can Help Dropouts and The Ad Hoc Committee Against Crack" (Tom Pendleton), which describes two recent DOME projects that educate middle school students in Manhattan, New York; and (6) "Getting It Together" (Fred Persily), which recommends strategies for starting a community crime prevention program. (BJV)

* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *

1-19-88

ED298186

Addressing The Causes Of Youth Crime

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY
HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Steve Fiedglord
William R. Rizzo
Resource Center
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

- ☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- ☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

696 520 969

Copyright © 1987 by the Human Rights Resource Center. All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission from the publisher.

Published by the Human Rights Resource Center, San Rafael, California

Human Rights Resource Center
30 North San Pedro Road, Suite 140
San Rafael, California 94903

▪COVER PHOTO: Heidi Rand ▪PUBLICATION & COVER DESIGN: Teligraphics ▪ON THE COVER: Aisha Tyler, Todd Aument, San Francisco

ADDRESSING THE CAUSES OF YOUTH CRIME

A Human Rights Resource Center Report • 1987

NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Boyd Bosma, Human Rights Specialist
National Education Association

Ed Chen, Staff Attorney
American Civil Liberties Union

Jan Roberts Chapman, Director
Center For Women's Policy Studies

Paul Chignell, Vice President
California Organization for Police and Sheriffs

James Damos, Chief
University City Police Department

Henry Der, Director
Chinese for Affirmative Action

Carole Hahn, Professor of Education
Emory University

Ronald Hampton, Past President
National Black Police Association

William Hastie, Attorney

Jerry Herman, District Attorney
County of Marin

Judy Heuman, Director
Center for Independent Living

Jeffrey Levi, Executive Director
National Gay Task Force

Ron Lucas, Branch Chief (Retired)
Office of Civil Rights
U.S. Dept of Health & Human Services

Alice Lytle, Judge
Sacramento Municipal Court

Marty Mercado, Chief
Office of Community and Consumer Affairs,
California Attorney General's Office

Richard Miller, Executive Director
American Association of School Administrators

Robert Muszar, Vice President
Peace Officers Research Association of
California

William Pollard, Deputy Executive Director
NAACP

Cruz Reynoso, Justice

Richard Sloan, Chair
Marin County Human Rights Commission

Robert Stockwell
Marin County Board of Supervisors

Enrique Valenzuela, Director of Leadership
Programs, Mexican-American Legal Defense
and Education Fund

Coralie Whitmore, Director
National Institute of Corrections Information
Center

STAFF

Suzanne Arnold, Copyeditor

Shirley Cole, Secretary

Trish Donahue, Criminal Justice Specialist

Myriam Lieberman, Support Services

Virginia Franklin, Education Specialist

Betty Times, Project Director

Luther Wallace, Project Coordinator

Toni Wynn, Editor

NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND STAFF

Table of Contents

I Introduction	4
II Police Officers Can <i>Prevent</i> Crime: An Action Plan by Trish Donahue, Criminal Justice Specialist Human Rights Resource Center	5
III Excerpt: Making A Difference: Young People in Community Crime Prevention by the National Crime Prevention Council	9
IV Addressing Crime: The City of Santa Fe Springs Model by Antonio A. Lopez, Ph. D., Community Psychologist and Gustavo Velasco, Assistant City Manager/Community Services	17
V The Campaign for a Healthier Community for Children by Dorothy Hughes, Director Mental Health Association of Marin	23
VI At Close Range: How Community Groups Can Help Dropouts and The Ad Hoc Committee Against Crack by Tom Pendleton, Director The DOME Project	29
VII Getting It Together by Fred Persily HRRRC Program Developer	33

INTRODUCTION

The Human Rights Resource Center compiles extensive information on issues facing America's communities. To provide more in-depth information about successful model programs and approaches to these issues, HRRC is publishing a series of journals. Each journal deals with a specific problem and provides blueprints for setting up programs to combat that problem. This publication, *Addressing the Causes of Youth Crime*, is first in the series. Most of this issue's contents dwell on youth and the community: how grassroots organization, police involvement, and partnership with local government and boards of education can prevent youth from criminal involvement through participation in productive and enjoyable work and activities. In each article, active participation is stressed.

The HRRC contribution, written by Criminal Justice Specialist Trish Donahue, is a "bottom-up" approach for organized police/community involvement. Based on a composite of requests responded to by HRRC, *Police Officers Can Prevent Crime: An Action Plan* suggests that line officers become involved in facilitating change by asking sensitive questions, assessing risks, and gaining support from their superiors and the community.

In 1985, the National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) published *Making A Difference — Young People in Community Crime Prevention*, the first chapter of which is reprinted here. NCPC presents the youths' points of view: youth as crime victims, why youth care about their communities, and the whys and hows of involving young people in community crime prevention. For one of the book's most useful chapters, NCPC surveyed community crime prevention youth programs across the country. *Making A Difference* is based on these programs.

In *Addressing Crime: The City of Santa Fe Springs Model*, Antonio Lopez and Gus Velasco of the city of Santa Fe Springs, California, offer a model for communities that wish to design comprehensive services, emphasizing prevention as opposed to taking a "band-aid" approach. Santa Fe Springs, a mid-sized city near Los Angeles, provides services for preschool-age children through young adults. Eleven city programs are highlighted. Dr. Lopez and Mr. Velasco emphasize the city's view of undesirable behavior and its respect for children in planning community services to deter crime.

Marin County is an upper-middle-class suburban community just north of San Francisco. The Mental Health Association of Marin, directed by Dorothy Hughes, has created a "Campaign for a Healthier Community for Children." The article details the fundamentals of organizing this kind of community effort, which joins youth and adult forces in the community to work toward more peaceful, interactive neighborhoods. Also included is a sample of the campaign's project models and activities.

Two pieces by the DOME Project are featured in this issue. This New York City-based youth service organization works with the neediest youth on academic, social and employment problems. *At Close Range*, written by DOME Project director Tom Pendleton, features case studies which reveal some causes for the chronic delinquent behavior demonstrated in schools and on city streets. Pendleton promotes a working relationship between boards of education, private foundations, and community-based organizations. DOME has organized an Ad-Hoc Committee Against Crack, which is also outlined in this journal.

Do you have an idea germinating for a community crime prevention program? *Getting It Together* guides you step-by-step from evaluating your idea to selling it to those from whom you seek support. Fred Persily, former HRRC coordinator, also includes a financial strategy which explores opportunities for funding in his article.

In the HRRC resource network of agencies, organizations, and civil rights, education, and law enforcement practitioners, we have a wealth of good news. Communities are working not just to resolve human rights problems, but, as important, to *prevent* them. It is our hope that *Addressing the Causes of Crime* is a resource that you will use to catalyze change.

POLICE OFFICERS CAN PREVENT CRIME: An Action Plan

by Trish Donahue

The HRRC criminal justice specialist works with police and community groups to define community needs and to identify model programs and strategies for ameliorating conflict. HRRC has found that police involvement is an effective tool for addressing the reasons why young people commit crimes. Using the approach in this article, police officers look at the practical reasons that people perpetrate crimes, then plan pragmatic community programs for implementation by coalitions of police, community institutions, and organizations.

Ask police chiefs or police officers to name major problems in their communities and they list crimes like burglary, drug abuse, and illegal gang activity. Query them about why people in their communities commit these crimes and they point to unemployment, school dropout rates, lack of recreational activities, and other community services.

When asked about their efforts to solve these community problems, police often provide rationalizations to explain why they cannot be extensively involved in efforts to ameliorate them. But, law enforcement agencies can, and in some communities do, effectively address the reasons people commit crimes. The police follow an uncomplicated strategy, develop practical programs that deal with the causes of crime, and implement them.

Causes and Symptoms

Discussion of the causes of crime often bogs down in the semantics of "What is a cause and what is a symptom?" Some scholars and practitioners cite pervasive social ills as root causes; economic inequality, political alienation, and racism are examples. Community activists and police officers more often focus on problems they can address locally, such as unemployment and inadequate schools.

Police officers and other community workers run the risks of becoming either mired in considerations of root causes and major social problems or of ignoring those problems in the search for quick fixes. When they conclude that problems are unsolvable, they miss opportunities to prevent crime and to improve their communities' quality of life. On the other hand, when they conceal deep-rooted problems with simplistic quick fixes, the outcomes seldom meet the optimistic expectations. The debate on causes and symptoms should not hinder practical efforts to prevent crime. Deep-rooted social problems should neither be ignored nor used as excuses for inaction.

Identifying the Problem

Identifying and defining the problems that cause crime in a community are the first steps in planning a program to prevent crime. These steps require police officers' street sense and observation skills, along with information from other sources.

In a community where young people are organizing gangs and committing crimes, for example, police officials who want to prevent crimes need to ask a series of questions: Who are gang members? Why are they in a gang? Why are groups of young people fighting and committing crimes? Are the offenders students, truants, or school dropouts? Can their activities be redirected? Are there organized community recreation activities? Do racial or ethnic tensions exist among groups of young people? How difficult is it for young people to find employment? How do other young people view gang members? How can we get involved?

Police officers can answer these questions with their observations and with help from community residents and organizations. The answers define the problem: the reasons people commit crimes.

Example

The community in our example is a city with a predominantly Hispanic population of one million and an active manufacturing industry. Factory closings have increased unemployment and community tensions. The high school graduation rate has decreased. Gangs in the community provide young people with a place to hang out, a sense of belonging, and some legal fun activities. Police found that young people were not attending school. Programs, teachers, and counselors were not responding to the changing needs of an increasingly poor and minority student body. Economic hardship combined with racism and class discrimination to pit the town "have nots" against the "have a little and want to keep its." Funding cutbacks curtailed recreation programs and closed the community recreation center, when monies for needed repairs were unavailable.

Youth gangs, organized along racial and ethnic lines, reflected increasing intercultural tensions that were not being addressed. In this community, where most young people feel disenfranchised, gang members distinguish themselves as having a distinct identity. Few positive young adult role models exist for young people to emulate. Elected officials ignored the problem.

Setting Objectives

After police officers define the problems, they need to formulate objectives for solving them. Objectives are formulated by asking "What can we do to solve the problem?" The solutions delineated in objectives should be workable and should ameliorate the problem.

In the community described above, police chose as an objective "reducing the number of racially motivated gang fights to less than five in the next calendar year, using reporting procedures in place now." Information that police officers gained from their observations and from community contacts indicated the objective was attainable. If, for example, the objective was to eliminate all gang fights, it may have been unreasonable.

Attaining the objective will lessen a significant part of the community's juvenile crime problem, because it will reduce assaults. The objective must address the defined problem in a measurable way. Therefore, in setting objectives, police officers should use information available to them to identify a reasonable goal — one that will have a real impact on a problem — as a first step toward planning a solution.

Making a Commitment

Before planning the "how to's" of a program to prevent crime, police officers must make decisions about their commitments to the projects. Police officers take risks when they get involved in addressing community problems.

Holding a workshop on the topic can help to identify issues to be considered: Will the department administration support the project? Will a labor or other police organization support the project? How will other police officers respond? Do you have time for the project? What does your job as a sworn peace officer mean as you develop relationships with community people? What are the potential political problems? In some instances, police officers assess the risks, decide to gain the support of officials and community groups, and proceed with the project. In other situations, police decide the risks are too great.

Reviewing Resources

The next step in initiating a crime prevention strategy is the practical assessment of obstacles to and resources for implementing ideas. Police working on reducing the number of gang fights in their community found several obstacles: a lack of jobs and recreational activities, outstanding grudges between gangs, and parental encouragement of racist attitudes. Community organizations, residents, merchants, churches, and schools are all potential resources.

Planning the Project

A review of resources and obstacles will help police officers decide what methodology, or steps, to use to reach program objectives. A detailed plan is not necessary, but a general outline that includes some alternatives is essential. Police planned several steps toward their objective, carrying out some of the steps themselves and gaining community organization support for accomplishing others.

Their plan included getting the city government's volunteer coordinator to develop unpaid training jobs for youth in government and local businesses; involving plant officials and the chamber of commerce in creating a summer job program; starting a recreation program at the schools staffed by fire and police department personnel; and asking the U.S. Department of Justice Community Relations Service for assistance in resolving community conflicts.

Their plan involved young people in developing, implementing, and evaluating programs. They let young people know that the continuation of programs was dependent on the reduction in violence. The plan was simple: using existing organizations rather than creating new entities, and requiring few financial resources.

Results

Addressing the conditions that cause crime is an essential component of fulfilling the obligations police officers and departments have to their communities. When police officers change the conditions that cause crime, they prevent crime, enhance community peace and safety, and save time and money.

In the past ten years, much attention has focused on police department crime prevention programs. For the most part, however, these efforts move the location of criminal activity rather than prevent crime. Community and police surveillance, identification projects, and other efforts may move some crime to another part of the community or aid in the apprehension of some perpetrators, but the crimes continue as long as the problems exist that are the reasons people commit crimes.

Police officers can go beyond controlling crime to preventing crime and improving the quality of life in the communities they serve. In communities around the country, police are working with community organizations to change the conditions that cause crime. Police in these communities point to improved police-community relations and more job satisfaction for police officers. Successful programs are models and resources for other police officers. Successful crime prevention programs that deal with the reasons people commit crimes are having concrete, measurable effects in communities: reduced crime rates.

Trish Donahue has been the Human Rights Resource Center's criminal justice specialist for four years. Ms. Donahue has worked with rape crisis centers and battered women's shelters, and provides on-going training for police officers.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE Young People in Community Crime Prevention

National Crime Prevention
Council copyright 1985

*The National Crime Prevention Council's (NCPC) primary mission is to prevent people from becoming victims of crime. A focus of NCPC activity is involving young people in crime prevention by addressing the reasons youths commit crimes. In 1985, NCPC undertook a major review of issues and programs in youth crime prevention. Their findings and recommendations are discussed below, in a reprint of chapter one of their book, **Making a Difference**.*

"It makes me feel good; you learn things grown-ups don't even know."

"Having those little kids look up to me is a scary feeling, but it's nice. And I've learned a lot."

"Kids just communicate better with other kids."

"If we didn't do it, it wouldn't get done. There's too much else for the regular staff to do."

"They need us out there."

That's why five different young people think they are important to their communities' security, safety and well-being. They are all partners with other young people and with adults in community crime prevention. How and where this happens, what happens, why it happens, and how you can make it happen are the subjects of this book.

Mixing Crime Prevention and Young People

When these two subjects have been joined in the past, the focus has been on keeping young people from committing crime (usually called primary prevention), keeping youth who have had some problems from getting formally involved with the criminal justice system (secondary prevention), or redirecting young people who have been judged guilty of some offense (tertiary prevention).

Instead of this, we propose another approach which offers positive rewards and benefits to all. Instead of merely protecting themselves, let young people assume the responsibility and the right to protect and help others — friends, family, neighbors.

It's exhilarating and it works. Whether you are a police officer, a school administrator, a youth worker, a concerned parent, a probation officer, or an interested young person, you can get involved. Everyone gains. Young people learn and grow; crime goes down because more is being done to prevent it; communities have not only a better present but a brighter future, because young people have made a difference and now know that as youths or adults, they can make a difference.

Our Roadmap

First, an overview of the issues — what stake young people have in preventing crime and what makes crime prevention of interest to those who work with communities and youth. High school juniors and seniors in Wisconsin teach fifth graders why vandalism is wrong. Co-ed high school teams in Kansas City instruct elementary school students on the consequences of shoplifting. Teens in Tampa patrol to keep community pools, playgrounds and parks safer, and get the chance to work with younger people and adults. Young people in Boston candidly tell business owners and oldsters what makes them easy marks and how to avoid being targets. Texas teenagers organized to curb vandalism in their schools reach beyond that issue to create incentives for good sportsmanship and community service. An escort and aide service provided by young people in a New York City housing project for senior residents leads to a "home-cooked" Thanksgiving thank-you dinner by the elders.

Do Kids Really Care?

There are questions in the minds of many about whether young people care about crime as a problem — or their communities — and whether community crime prevention makes a difference. Similarly, there are questions about whether actively involving young people in crime prevention isn't just a gimmick.

Our investigations clearly show that young people worry about crime and about its impact on their communities; community crime prevention works; young people represent tremendous and urgently needed resources to help prevent crime and make their communities places in which they can proudly live; community crime prevention provides an arena in which youth can effectively exercise responsibility and authority.

Young People Have a Stake in Preventing Crime

Some adults argue that young people don't understand the problem of crime in their community, partly because they have no vested interests threatened by crime.

On the contrary. Talk to a 12-year-old whose bike has just been stolen. Console a 15-year-old who had her radio and her new coat ripped from her locker. Watch a 14-year-old get stitches in the emergency room after he's been mugged by a 24-year-old. Wince at the pain in a 17-year-old's eyes as she talks of a friend killed by drunk driving. These young people understand crime well from personal experience!

The most recent data show that youth (ages 12-19) are victimized at a rate roughly half again higher than that of adults. Adults age 25-40 are victimized by violent crimes at a 41 per thousand rate. Teenagers 16 to 19 years old are victimized at a 65 per thousand rate. Even younger teens — 12 to 15 years old — are violent crime victims roughly 25% more frequently than mid-range adults.

Youth are the most victimized by theft as well. The 12-15 year old group experience 126 thefts per thousand; the 16-19 year old group 119 thefts per thousand. In contrast, mid-range adults experience fewer than 100 thefts per thousand.

In *A Safe Place to Live*, Dr. Georgette Bennett points out "...a profile of the person most likely to be a crime victim (looks like this):"

- young
- poor or unemployed
- male
- unmarried
- Black or Hispanic

Crimes against youth are not petty. The consequences are far from trivial. The U.S. House Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families puts it bluntly: "Adolescents are victims of crime. Accidents, poisons and violence are the leading causes of death for 15 to 24 year olds."

There is a curious element of irony in adult perceptions of youth and crime. Adults fear youthful criminals. The elderly in study after study reveal themselves to be more fearful of crime than victims of crime. Their greatest fears center on young people, even though these young people are violent crime victims at a rate 10 to 12 times greater than Americans over age 65! "The elderly (the least victimized group) are more afraid than the young (the most victimized group)."

Crime is a Community Problem

Although not at the incredibly high levels of the 1970s, crime and the fear of crime remain problems for all Americans, from the urban core to the rural hamlet, from children in latchkey homes to the elderly in fear of leaving their homes. About 38 million households (roughly one in four) were touched by crime in 1983; nearly half a million households were twice victimized (at least one burglary and one violent crime by a stranger).

Although about two-thirds of all burglaries are committed against residential properties, businesses are burglarized about five times more frequently than households in proportion to their numbers.

Behind these dry statistics lies the stark reality of neighborhoods, towns, and cities populated by citizens who fear daily for their personal safety, who perceive each other through a veil of mistrust and suspicion, and who conduct business in an atmosphere laden with apprehension and bristling with siege mentality. What happens when crime invades a neighborhood? Small businesses flee to safer locales; homeowners reject the communality of porches and front yards in favor of the more certain protection of their locked homes and sheltered back yards. The disappearance of some businesses cuts traffic to those which remain. Vacant stores and boarded windows discourage customers. Business retreat becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. The storekeeper loses, the community loses. Homeowners no longer observant of their streets and sidewalks make crime easier not just for muggers and purse snatchers but for burglars and vandals.

Professor James Q. Wilson of Harvard astutely observed in his landmark book *Thinking About Crime*:

By disrupting the delicate nexus of ties, formal and informal, by which we are linked with our neighbors, crime atomizes society and makes of its members mere individual calculators estimating their own advantage, especially their own chances for survival amidst their fellows. Common undertakings become difficult or impossible...

Surveys and studies can readily measure only the tangible costs of crime, but these are sufficient to suggest the magnitude of the community's problem. In 1980, direct cash and property losses from reported crimes exceeded \$10 billion. Less than \$4 billion was recovered through insurance. More than 2 million Americans were injured while victimized by crime; their medical expenses, time lost from work, and long-term disabilities must be added to already staggering totals.

The cash penalties crime imposes on a neighborhood are even higher — costs borne not just by the victim who suffers personal injury, emotional insult and financial loss; not just by the employer, whose business is hurt by time lost from work by employees or in losses from pilferage, vandalism and shoplifting; not just by taxpayers who must fund more police and courts. Unmeasurable but unquestionable costs include loss of personal dignity, loss of valued ties, loss of the tremendous productivity which comes from working together to meet community needs, and loss of the enrichment we provide to each other as neighbors.

Winning the fight against crime can save or establish a community. Neighbors help themselves and each other; lessons learned in crime prevention, rewarded by success, are applied to other community problems.

Young People Understand How Crime Hurts Communities

Many adults are astonished to learn that teenagers see crime as a serious community problem. Abandoned cars in the neighborhood usually will upset adults. But teenagers hired to get hulks off the streets of Flatbush knew their work was vital; "The kids have street sense. They know what happens to the plates off these cars. They've seen these cars torched. They worry about [the danger of] little ones, younger brothers and sisters," an adult co-worker observed.

Five hundred teenagers from East Harlem (New York City) were asked to rate problems facing their community, in a poll conducted by the East Harlem Youth Congress. They were asked to score a list of 22 items as important or very important to themselves and their community. Crime was the *top-ranked* community problem by a substantial margin; drugs ranked second, abandoned buildings third and dirty streets fourth. These young people not only perceive crime as the most significant problem facing their community; in fact, their estimate of community problems is remarkably like that we could expect from adults.

An informal group of 11 teenagers in the small town of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin was asked "What's wrong with Fond du Lac?" Answers shot back; "People taking drugs," "Vandals wrecking things for everyone else," "It's not as safe as it used to be."

Youngsters in Chicago's suburbs expressed similar concerns and echoed the longing of many for a better place to live: "We want to be proud of our town."

Gang leaders, age 18 to 23, in Oakland, California said that crime and unemployment were the most serious problems facing their communities. "The streets just aren't safe. That's why the little kids join up [with gangs] in the first place," one observed. Another commented "You need protection out there. You can't make it alone." The speaker, a young man, had broken up a knife fight at a local hall just the night before.

Don't Young People Have Enough to Do Keeping Themselves Safe?

Personal safety tactics — how to reduce chances of being a crime victim by avoiding hazardous situations and making it harder for criminals to succeed — are vital to self-protection. And self protection is important for adults, adolescents, and children. But as the young man from Oakland so eloquently said, "You can't make it alone."

Most young people don't want to make it alone. By their very nature, adolescent years are the time for widening of horizons to taste and test the institutions, roles and communities they will shortly be dealing with as adults.

Teenage horizons expand to include wider ranges of friendship, to reflect broader interests, toward the important career and personal decisions they will soon face. Aside from teenagers' increasing desire to participate in the community at large, they are smart enough to understand that their personal safety can be assured only if their neighborhoods and communities are safe.

But I Found My Own Way When I Was Growing Up!

Somehow or another, we all learn how to be adults. In years past, we learned from experiences acquired in our teens. The struggles of farming and the burdens of less technically advanced existence meant that everyone in the family — and the family was an extended group across and within generations — had to take part, to pitch in, to do a share. But "...from this came also the knowledge of one's talents and limits...the struggle saw the young graced with... integrity of accomplishment..."

Within the past generation and a half, the social framework has undergone dramatic shifts:

- Within the next ten years, half of all children will spend a significant portion of their lives in a single-parent family. Results: less daily interaction with both parents; greater probability of latchkey status, with no parental interaction during a substantial part of the child's day.
- Americans are having fewer and fewer children per family; the two-parent multi-child family has become an anachronism. Result: fewer sibling role models, less older-to-younger child supervision and instruction.
- Fewer and fewer families live in an extended family environment. Not only does Grandmother no longer live in the same house with the family — she and Grandpa may live in a different state half a continent away and may still be working! Result fewer opportunities for intergenerational sharing and teaching.
- Housing has become generationally segregated, with younger families moving farther and farther into the suburbs or the country; older relatives unwilling or unable to afford relocation remain in cities or close-in suburbs — or move to "retirement" communities. Results: a less balanced neighborhood environment; less exposure to diversity of lifestyles and age groups.
- Fewer and fewer adults are available during the day or are located where they can assume even cursory surrogate, model and consular roles for adolescents. Result: Forced reliance on peer group for any sort of support and modeling; reduced opportunities for informal learning.

Thus, young people, themselves still vulnerable, have fewer resource adults to whom they can turn for personal safety, as a source of values and role modeling, and as counsel — let alone for extending their experience beyond self and beyond self and nuclear family to the larger community.

Why Involve Young People?

Young people are drastically short-changed if their roles are limited to targets and recipients — what we have called "**at and for**" approaches. "**At and for**" attitudes suggest that the adolescents in question are and rightly ought to be objects, not subjects, of service. To limit teens to passive roles denies their growth, their interest in and need to learn about the community, and their ability to make adult-grade (and sometimes better) contributions.

Community crime prevention offers new vistas for permitting and encouraging young people in positive and valued contributions to their friends, families and communities. The traditional and still necessary instruction in self-protective behavior, and services to help young people deal with challenges and problems of adolescence, in and of themselves do not directly acknowledge or utilize teenagers' talents and/or broaden their perspectives.

A shift in thinking is required — a shift in the thinking of police, principals, sheriffs, social workers, district attorneys, teachers, probation-officers, youth group leaders, crime prevention practitioners, youth workers, and others.

The new focus should be on community activities such as crime prevention **"with and by"** young people. They should be expected, not just encouraged, to take responsible roles, and to extend their services outside family and close friends. They should be valued as assets in their communities.

But What Can These Kids Do?

Generally, the same crime prevention activities as adults! Crime prevention needs all the resources it can get; police are not always there; adults have other pressures. Young people have problems and pressures, too. But they can be expected to chip in and do their share for their community. And the results are striking.

Young people have run Neighborhood Watches (regular adult version), Youth Crime Watches (making their own schools safer), Operation ID programs, and other traditional crime prevention efforts. They have fingerprinted children, taught self-protection to older people, engaged in classroom instruction for elementary school kids, cleaned up graffiti, repaired vandalism, and provided patrol of crime-troubled areas.

This Sounds Fine In Theory, But...

This is not theory. It is the distillation of facts, of real experiences, from real people in real places throughout the U.S. and Canada.

The programs cited in this book were picked because they were good ones, but not because they are run by supermen, superwomen, or superteens. We sought programs which had sprung from community need and interest, which had realistic goals and a demonstrable track record of positive results. We looked for sound programs which had achieved community support.

But we were not interested in running a competition for the "top ten" or "top twenty." If the blending of youth and community crime prevention worked, it had to work in all kinds of circumstances, not just "the best."

Equally, we refused to limit our selections to youth service programs, or to police and sheriffs' efforts, or to any other special group's approach.

A wide net was cast throughout the social service and criminal justice communities, into the literature, and across the government and volunteer realms for programs which met three criteria:

- Programs had to involve crime prevention, not simply youth-in-action.
- Young people (roughly 10-20 years of age) had to be active and responsible participants in service delivery.
- The programs had to involve active community outreach, with services aimed not at the participants but at others.

Broad geographic spread was a goal. Programs were sought in core city areas, suburbs, rural settings, small towns. Diversity of crime prevention activities, age levels and target populations was another search criterion.

Some informal efforts did exist. One parent from a Long Island (NY) community involved neighborhood teenagers along with adults: "These are the kids that help me run Neighborhood Watch. They're practically my most active volunteers!"

Such national resources as NCRY (the Nation Commission on Resources for Youth), the Center for Community Change, the National Criminal Justice Reference Service and CIVITEX (the National Municipal League's database) were queried for possible program leads. Calls to active state and local agencies were placed. Personal networks in crime prevention and youth work were activated.

Frequently, "at and for" programs were offered — in themselves extremely good, but not within our bounds. The professors, advised of our search for "with and by" programs, expressed strong interest. Their enthusiasm for the concept was frequently a spur to greater effort when the search lagged; it became clear that there were receptive audiences.

Field visits and interviews with youth and adults were conducted in many instances. These yielded invaluable insights. In particular, they helped clarify the need for "customizing," for avoiding automatic replication in favor of designing a program which meets your specific needs. The keys, as you will see, are process rather than substances. These programs succeed not because of what is done, but how it is done.

The National Crime Prevention Council is a private non-profit organization concerned with preventing people from becoming crime victims. NCPC offers technical assistance, coordinates the Crime Prevention Coalition, and does public service advertising with the U.S. Department of Justice and the Advertising Council. Jean O'Neil, NCPC's Director of Research and Computer Operations, is the primary writer of Making A Difference.

ADDRESSING CRIME: The City of Santa Fe Springs Model

by Antonio Lopez, Ph.D., and
Gustavo Velasco

The city of Santa Fe Springs, California, responded to youth gang violence by developing successful programs that deal with the reasons young people commit violent crimes. Santa Fe Springs is a small industrial city near Los Angeles with a predominantly Hispanic population of about 16,000. In the late 1970s, youth crime in Santa Fe Springs increased to a dangerous level. Violent confrontations among gangs and with law enforcement officers were occurring frequently. Arrests did not deter and, in some cases, even seemed to escalate violence.

*To respond, a city council member organized concerned parents. Working with gang members and parents, the city negotiated non-violence agreements among the gangs and developed programs to meet community needs: employment, education, and police-community relations. In return for guarantees that violence would end, the city developed new community services that decreased school drop-out rates, placed young people in jobs, and brought police into community programs. Young people were involved in every phase of each project. Today those programs go beyond **response** to focus on **prevention**.*

This article addresses the City of Santa Fe Springs' approach that evolved to address concerns about its children's undesirable behavior. The Santa Fe Springs model is successful due to a changed emphasis: from immediate solutions to prevention. To build a sound model for addressing a problem, one must first discuss how the problem is construed or conceptualized. The Santa Fe Springs model is the result of many years of social service experience. Conceptually, it is based upon an understanding that the meaning of behavior varies tremendously across time and culture.

To implement a successful crime prevention program, consideration must be given to the community's definition of "undesirable behavior" rather than looking to immediate solutions such as more police or more jobs. Delinquency is construed as an undesirable behavior, and subsequent intervention is based on the city's view of childhood: that children are valued and respected to the fullest extent possible. Their emotional and cognitive differences from adults make them more vulnerable yet more amenable to change. Consequently, children are expected to behave responsibly and to their fullest level of competency. These expectations are derived from Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive/emotional growth in children. Responsibility is expected, and, further, expectations reflect the community's idea of "rights for children" and respect for the child's cultural background.

Delinquency is a new concept in the history of mankind. The most effective agent to combat juvenile delinquency, the juvenile court, was created only at the turn of the century. History reveals that young people have committed a variety of "delinquent behaviors." However, these behaviors were not considered illegal until the nineteenth century.

Crime is a very easy behavior to define and punish. The punishment, however, is very inconsistent and confusing when children are involved. For example, today's criminal justice system seems unable to discern whether children should be treated as adults or as children. Current and historical methods of "punishing" childhood criminals are not decreasing the rise in criminal behavior.

Juvenile courts exercise two kinds of views: juveniles who violate the law are either given their rightful punishment, or the violation is treated as an immature and underdeveloped behavior. The Santa Fe Springs model incorporates both views. To the extent that each child can be afforded both behavioral explanations, the model protects the rights of the child with its provision of community services.

In the case of criminal acts, the city fully supports the sheriff's department in its apprehension and prosecution of persons associated with criminal activity. The city provides a Sheriff Liaison Office in city hall, which promotes the well-being of the community by establishing and facilitating cooperative police-resident business relationships. Activities of this office have included participation in programs such as crime prevention seminars, the community deputy specialist program, and school-age tutoring. Deputies are free to decide what level of involvement suits their needs. This kind of program is suited for deputies who are willing to widen their views of human behavior without compromising their duty to protect and serve the community.

The city of Santa Fe Springs' Department of Community Services consists of three divisions: recreation, social, and library. Each division develops and implements services to meet the community's needs and to prevent delinquency. In addition, the city makes provisions for special programs. All programs within each division are evaluated yearly to institute change and to develop changed goals. Each service has a direct link with the city council through the department of community services, and the department serves as a supervising resource. This relationship is more clearly defined in Table 1.

Table 1

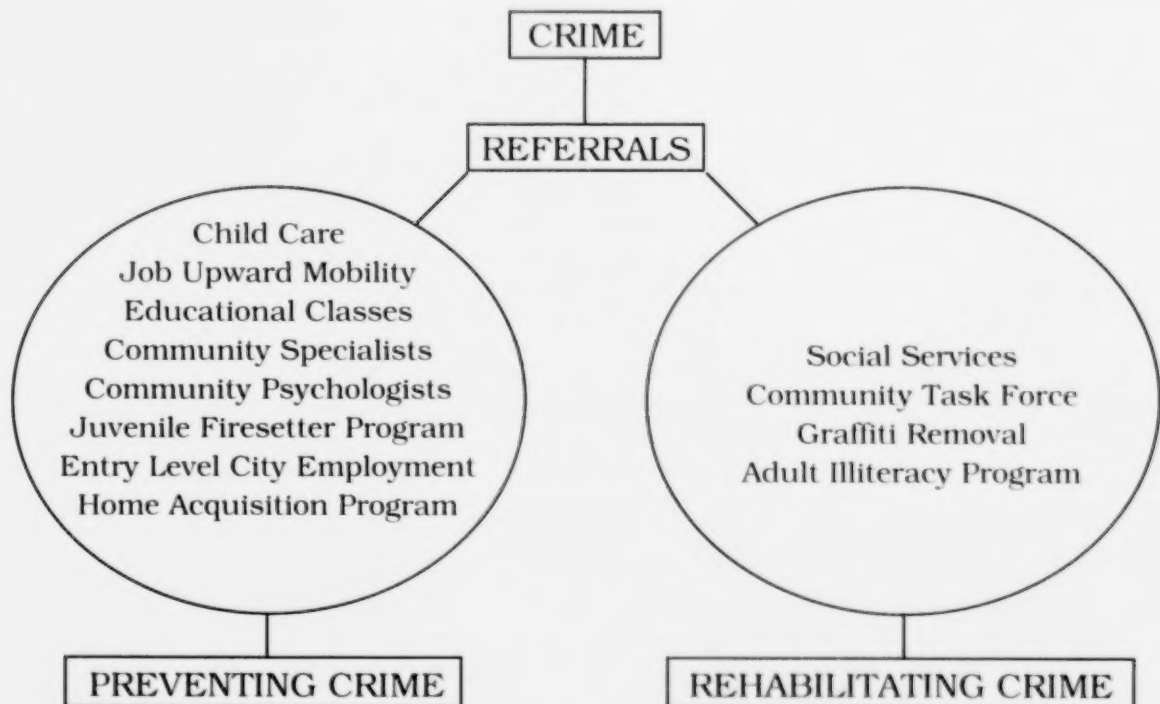


Table 1 lists how community services interact and whether these services are preventive or rehabilitative. In considering Table 1, consider the following practical development of the services:

- A) The primary scope of the community services department is prevention. When this is not possible, services are directed toward aiding or alleviating the consequences to crime.
- B) Several programs may have been developed as a response to an initial problem; later, continuing them rested on their ability to address the antecedents of the problem under consideration.
- C) All of the programs are coordinated to encourage reciprocal referrals and to maximize human services skills among personnel.
- D) Depending on the service, maximum and cooperative outreach is extended to appropriate community resources such as schools, churches, civic groups, and, in some cases, through established advisory groups composed of city council-appointed residents and business residents.
- E) Crime is given its rightful interpretation, that is, the actual behavior is understood as "an expression of an underlying problem." Therefore, a history of the problem is very important. For example, diversion programs are key, as first-time offenders may be viewed as "reachable;" third-time offenders may not be amenable to our efforts. Discriminatory social and police practices are minimized by attending to decriminalization.

In order to gain a clearer picture of how these concepts impact the Santa Fe Springs model, each of the programs and services mentioned in Table 1 is discussed. *The most important concept, however, is the emphasis on prevention rather than on rehabilitation.*

Child Care (School-age and Pre-school):

Children between the ages of 3 and 12 years are eligible for enrollment in the city's child development programs. Originally developed to meet the needs of school-aged children and working parents, the program now extends its nationally accredited and licensed services to pre-schoolers. These services are subsidized by the city (school-age) and the state of California (pre-school).

The school-age program was implemented to meet the childcare needs of the Santa Fe Springs community, while the pre-school program has been broadened to meet the needs of persons outside the city, such as business residents. This program helps reduce youth crime by helping parents place their children in nurturing environments. Consequently, child neglect, abuse, and, therefore, crime are prevented. This program also provides the child and family with a smooth sense of community socialization, because community expectations are a part of these programs.

**Job Upward
Mobility Program:**

This program uniquely links the world of the adolescent with the adult world of work. This program operates a yearly youth business partnership summer program whereby local businesses cooperate with the city by hiring local youth (wages are subsidized by federal monies). The youth participating in this program are given several weeks of orientation, which is designed to help them understand how to meet the expectations of local employers. In addition, several federal programs operate in the city to help others in the immediate area and to provide a broader base of employment referrals. Adults are also provided employment services. This program seems to work best as a preventive tool rather than as a diversional tool. The earlier the adolescent is involved in the program, the more likely the youth will display effective socialization skills expected by employers and by the program.

**Educational
Classes:**

Classes are offered to community and business residents through the city's extensive park system and recreational facilities. Classes range from specific art instruction to more organized interests such as gymnastics or synchronized swimming. Approximately 40 different classes are offered each year, in addition to the usual recreation programs such as soccer, baseball, and swimming. Other unique features include summer day camps, beach camps, a teenage recreation site called Town Center, a tiny-tot program, and a community garden facility.

These services are coordinated throughout the city with full community support. Many of the area's youngsters begin employment at entry-level positions with the city's recreation division.

**Community
Specialists:**

Perhaps one of the most progressive steps the city has taken to address crime is involving off-duty sheriff's officers in the recreation, library, and social service departments. In addition, the city has established community liaison officers with an office in city hall. The ideal role played by these officers is in community contact/involvement outside of their regular duties, such as: tutoring at the day care centers (the city has three sites); juvenile diversion counseling; volunteering for a variety of special projects such as Santa's float, Christmas basket program, community advisory groups, and other city-sponsored cultural events; crime prevention seminars for businesses; and instructors for the city's educational classes. Consequently, police are involved in a positive manner while maintaining high visibility for criminal deterrence.

**Community
Psychologist:**

Originally begun as a part-time "gang outreach" position, the community psychologist now provides expert consultation to the city on matters of human behavior. Program services include preventing behavioral problems and enhancing competence, as well as providing brief individual and family counseling. Developing community resources and networking are essential to maintaining this program. Referrals and advising residents about services are managed by this program; school-based prevention programs are given maximum priority. Over the years, some seven prevention programs have been associated with the community psychologist. The creation of the community psychologist position was part of the city's evolving prevention model. Newer programs involve this position with child development centers, community education, and resource development. This is one of the most highly visible positions in the city.

**Juvenile Firesetter
(Prevention)
Program:**

Implemented and supervised by the city's fire department, the juvenile firesetter program is aimed at identifying juvenile firesetters and educating children about fire prevention. This unique program operates on resident or department referrals. Trained personnel establish interview and assessment instruments to identify children and families who are at risk. Resident referrals are made to the community psychologist.

**Entry Level City
Employment:**

Resident youngsters are frequently involved in what may be termed "entry level city positions." This is not a program per se, but a consideration that, whenever possible, aide positions are created throughout the city structure. This might include a public works aide, a library page, a recreation leader, a social work intern, and administrative interns. Each position may become permanent employment, depending on budgetary constraints. In addition, the city extends every consideration possible to employ residents without compromising required skills or training.

**Home Acquisition
Program:**

This is the city's community ecological program whereby homes are purchased and renovated. Homes are then available to residents who are not homeowners and who have established themselves as renters in the city for at least six months. A lottery is held, and the city sells homes to lottery winners provided they meet the necessary and usual financial requirements for buying a home. This ecological approach to enhancing life in the city reduces crime by helping families take pride of ownership in the community.

Social Services:

As a division within the city's department of community services, social services provides an array of community resources such as immigration counseling, emergency food and shelter referrals, dental services for resident youngsters, summer youth camps, legal services and referrals, and senior citizen services. The neighborhood center is the hub of social services activity. The facility is used for meetings such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Senior Citizen Advisory groups, senior nutrition and activities, civic groups, and social activities for the community. In addition, childcare programs are directly administered through this division. The job upward mobility program and the community psychologist's office are located in the neighborhood center.

**Community Task
Force:**

The task force consists of the liaison police officer, the community psychologist, the assistant director of recreation, and several area youth who have worked successfully with the city. Originally developed to establish rapport and to ease tensions among identified youth gangs, the community task force now operates on an as-needed basis. It spots group tension and intervenes using established rapport, sometimes involving discussions with parents and school officials. The rapport among task force members is maintained and monitored by the assistant city manager. With gang tensions becoming controlled, the task force began directing area youth to other resources in the city. It also identifies younger siblings who need more positive role models than their brother's or sister's negative group behavior.

Graffiti Removal: This is clearly a rehabilitative program, designed to remove undesirable and unrestricted public and private property defacement. It is implemented by the department of public works. Procedures are to photograph the writing or defacement, remove it, and repair the surface as soon as possible. The photographs are used to identify tension in the community or to initiate prosecution in cases of particular identification. The community task force handles the problem when the graffiti is removed.

Adult Illiteracy Program: This is a pilot program operated by the city's library, which addresses one of the traditional correlates of crime: unemployment. Teaching adults to read increases their employability. This, in turn, reduces family stress and juvenile misconduct. The library also provides stimulating educational assistance through children's summer book clubs, resources for self-improvement, and regular outreach to local schools.

Summary Clearly, the key word in the Santa Fe Springs model is *prevention*. In this view, the earlier the intervention or service the more lasting and effective the desired behavior. The scope of the city's services is broad: services are available for virtually all residents. This allows residents to feel important and empowered. Leadership and coordination of services reflect the changing demography of the structures in the community and the institutions created to serve it. The result is the development and creation of programs rather than mere discussions. The attitude among those involved in preventing crime has been positive and optimistic. In human service programming there is little or no room for pessimistic or cynical views of human behavior.

Many of the city's efforts began as ideas and grew into effective strategies; other services were carefully planned and intentionally designed. All of the services in Santa Fe Springs are aimed at re-establishing or establishing attachments to school and home; to maximize youth experiences, so they can seek conventional pursuits and leisure activities; and to provide youth offenders with renewed opportunities. Some services suggest that crime may be addressed by understanding children's cognitive and emotional differences, so that early labeling does not set up a self-fulfilling prophecy. Other services, such as the home acquisition program, suggest that effective socialization is a key to preventing crime. As such, the institutional design of community development in the city realizes that the manner in which homes, schools, and community services structures are organized affect the establishment of "ownership" among all its residents — both young and old.

Antonio Lopez has been Santa Fe Springs' community psychologist for three years. Prior to that, Dr. Lopez provided crime prevention consulting to the city. He received his Ph.D. from the California School of Professional Psychology in Los Angeles in 1979.

THE CAMPAIGN FOR A HEALTHIER COMMUNITY FOR CHILDREN

by Dorothy Hughes

Activists in Marin County, California, set out to identify and address the reasons that young people in that affluent county commit crimes. They found a dearth of community activities and a resulting lack of sense of community, compounded by high levels of family stress.

The Campaign for a Healthier Community for Children brings adults and young people together to build community projects and community spirit. They work together to plan and implement projects to make their neighborhoods into the kinds of places they want to live. The Campaign receives low-level funding from a local foundation. Three community activities planning councils currently operate in the county.

The Campaign For A Healthier Community for Children (Campaign) is an inter-generational, multi-agency, yet primarily volunteer effort to prevent social isolation, nuclear family stress, and neighborhood disintegration. It focuses on increasing coordination between the private agency network and the public agencies serving criminal justice clients, primarily Juvenile Probation and the (towns of) San Anselmo and Fairfax Police Departments. It also lends itself well to another priority area: that of providing resources for alternatives to prosecution for (juvenile) first-time and minor offenders.

The Campaign is an experiment in grassroots community organization and education, designed to assist children and adults in coming together in their own neighborhoods to foster mutual, nonconfrontative support and action. In Marin, those of us concerned with the increase in vandalism, drug and child abuse, teenage suicide, and alcoholism have begun to establish intervention programs for these symptomatic difficulties. But that alone cannot approach the larger issue of how we are to restructure our society so that people may live together peacefully. The Campaign is intended not only to provide alternative and progressive activities for children and adults together, but also to demonstrate on a small scale that it is possible to change the way we live.

The Campaign officially began on October 8, 1983, when more than fifty community organizers — most of them volunteers — representing seven communities or townships gathered to hear and refine the concept. As a result of that meeting, Campaign activities are occurring in one of these communities, with interest and planning going on in three others.

As the Mental Health Association's executive director, I envisioned the program long before it came to fruition. My ideas were based on the most basic preventive model of mental health care. In the fall of 1983, children and adults were invited to join the council, and were asked what their vision of a happy, healthy community was. One of their ideas was to have a fun day — thus, the Festival of the Children.

What makes the Campaign unique is that children have equal status with adults on the council. People treat each other with trust and respect, share insights, listen carefully to each other and support each other's ideas. Children are encouraged to take on responsibilities that would ordinarily be designated for adults. The council's secretary is 12 years old, and the family film festival's movie projectionist is 13 years old.

The Mental Health Association is the main clearinghouse for all Campaign activities, providing organizational help, a newsletter service, mailing lists, project ideas, and encouragement. The cooperating agencies and groups provide in-kind contributions of resource people, meeting space, materials, and general community support and publicity. Although there are many events and projects the Campaign is involved with at any given time, it is important to remember the original vision that brought participants together. Clearly we have in mind that we're working to change the way in which we live.

The Campaign addresses the primary need to bring all generations together in successful experiments in cooperation and communication, starting in the places we know best — our own neighborhoods. We begin by recruiting children and teenagers to participate in powerful, meaningful ways in the everyday life of a few selected communities. Involvement in the community (and rich interactions with others) will give more meaning to children's lives, therefore reducing the need for negative behavior. In an atmosphere of mutual support, adults and children alike may rediscover their community and find ways to improve it through projects in the arts, human services, social activities, and the environment.

How to Start a Council for a Healthier Commu- nity for Children

The council is the primary planning body for the community's campaign activities, and is comprised of adults and children aged eight and older. The first step in organizing a Council for a Healthier Community for Children is to call people you know: friends, care givers, community leaders. Meet with them individually or in small groups (no more than four or five) to explain the goals and workings of the Campaign and the councils. Send anyone who shows the least interest an overview of the Campaign and a sample of its achievements, perhaps the latest newspaper article from their local paper. Give anyone who talks with you individually or in the small group packets of Campaign literature. Always have the press/photo album with you. People who are interested but who are too busy to become actively involved in a council can become spokespeople. Ask them for names of people they know who might be interested and your list of potential council members grows.

When you have a core of six to eight adults who are interested and available to form a council, establish a meeting date. Talk together about the guiding principles of the Campaign, and begin to plan for involving children and youth as council members. Get everyone's names spelled right, get their addresses and phone numbers (home and work). Copy that list and give to everybody.

While the core group is doing outreach to more adults and to children, members will talk to teachers and to parents who are active in the schools. Enlist the aid of these teachers and parents to talk to students about the Campaign and about becoming council members. Avoid going to the classroom, if you don't know the students. Someone they know can get them involved more easily in the first discussion, and get their commitment to attend a meeting with adults to discuss their visions of a happy community. Teachers can have children explore ideas and get the names of those who are interested in the Campaign. Arrange the students' and adults' first meeting to be near schools, immediately following the last class. If several schools are involved, arrange for transportation to and from the meeting. Serve refreshments. Council adults will discuss with children the kind of community they would like to live in — which will be closer to the possible than the class discussion — and then will talk about things they might do together to bring about their dreams. Choose a simple project first, one that can be rather easily accomplished. Let the children

choose. (Children like celebrations; don't be surprised if they want to plan a big one.) Invite the children to become Council members; get all their names and ways to be reached; set up the next meeting time.

When the first project is decided upon, find other people — musicians, artists, etc. — to become involved immediately. People will meet more people quickly and will make new friends. Ask the city council for whatever you need to accomplish your project — art display space, parade permit, street closing. Talk to someone you know on the council and the town manager before you make the formal request. If children want to make the request, help that happen if you can. Invite reporters to the town meetings; take photographs, even if a media photographer is there, because you will want to begin a history of your council and your progress. Early news coverage is very important, because people will begin to notice you, will begin to believe it is true if they "read it in the paper," and will want to become involved.

After your celebration, your council — now enhanced by people who loved the event — can look for projects to bring children and adults together in everyday ways. Look at the sample projects undertaken and successfully completed by established councils; you may want to follow their lead and take advantage of the planning and troubleshooting they've already been through. It is normal that potential Council members may not be able to participate in all meetings and projects. This is absolutely acceptable. Meeting times should vary — some at noon, some after school, some potlucks in the early evening, some evening meetings from 7:30 to 9:30 or so — to allow people to attend convenient meetings and to get all the business done. Transportation should be provided for children and older people, if needed. Remember that council membership for children does not depend on parent participation. Goals include creating more support for parents and assisting adults to take responsibility for the community's children. We cannot stress enough the importance of thorough recordkeeping of the council's progress and of all the contacts you make. Keep a list of people you'd like to keep informed of your activities, and do somewhat regular mailings to them. With your large and diverse council communication must be constant, so that everybody is clear on meetings, assignments, transportation schedules, etc.

It is important to gain the support and involvement of new people, and to continue to reach out to young and old alike. Examine all the possibilities your community offers for bringing people together in a variety of supportive, socially useful ways. Keep in contact with all the schools, the city councils, service clubs, businesspeople, agencies, and organizations that can help.

Don't predict how fast you can move, what will be successful, and what will not: You should only suggest and organize. Your supporters will plan for their needs; help them implement their plans. Hierarchical decisions and practices don't work for community organizing. Leadership is provided by different people taking responsibility as their time and skills dictate. Consensus rules. Don't argue with what others suggest; don't reject it immediately even if at first the idea seems unworkable. Instead, help everyone to consider various viewpoints carefully, as you proceed. Then, when the decision for action is finally attained, people are committed to help. Moreover, decisions made by a group will be more satisfying to a larger number of people. The choices made are an amalgam of various individuals' ideas. Again, the goals and purposes must always be in the forefront. Minor delays and setbacks are not damaging if the vision of unity, balance, and harmony is always with you.

Community Project Models

What: SCHOOL, COMMUNITY, AND FAMILY INTEGRATION

Who: Parents, school administrators, teachers, children, local merchants, and service deliverers meet to talk about how children can be brought into the adult world in appropriate and enjoyable ways, to interact with more adults, and to understand and participate in the total community.

School curriculum could include, at varying levels of commitment, for young and older children:

1. Community studies: Police, judges, lawyers, employers and workers, town council members meet with children to interact, explain/demonstrate their roles, and provide positive role models.
2. Apprenticeships: Older children apprentice to local artists, businesses, and services.
3. Community service/experience: Children tutor younger ones, help older people with chores, choose and do community improvement projects. School can offer:
 - use of school buildings for community activities
 - classes for parents and children together family relations, community development, politics, community affairs
 - activities for community integration
 - volunteer/teaching assistant programs for parents and older people for classroom and recreation activities

How: Students get school credit; no \$\$ exchange.

What: SERVICE CHAIN PILOTS

Who: Adults and latchkey children visit older people to help with errands and light housework. Older people teach skills (sewing, embroidery, woodwork) or tutor their helpers.

1. Latchkey children or other youth perform services for older people, for school or club merit.
2. Youth apprentice to local businesses or city hall in exchange for school credit.

How: No \$\$ exchange needed; reciprocal services or school credit exchanged.

What: TOWN/NEIGHBORHOOD INFORMATION CENTERS

Who: Older children and local businesses collaborate to build street corner kiosks to display flyers, announcements, etc. Kiosks are available to all community groups for poster display.

How: Building materials are donated; teenagers may receive school credit for building and maintaining kiosks.

What: NEIGHBORHOOD MUTUAL SUPPORT GROUPS

Who: Children and adults meet weekly to help each other resolve interpersonal problems in the family, with co-workers, with friends, through sharing insights and perceptions. Honor and respect, caring and cooperation are the keystones.

How: No leaders, no fee. Meet in local office or public building.

What: NATURAL DISASTER NEIGHBORHOOD GROUPS

Who: Neighbors plan for floods, earthquakes, etc., by identifying caregivers, open houses, food and water collection and storage plans, taking care of children and each other in an emergency.

How: Neighbors meet with Natural Disaster Planning Coordinator, assemble stores, plan lines of communication, decide who can take care of children and older people. Meet seasonally to keep plans up to date.

What: STOP BY ON YOUR WAY HOME FROM SCHOOL

Who: Latchkey and other children not involved in traditional after-school programs are invited to drop in after school for games, refreshments, art projects, storytelling, homework, or quiet time. Simple refreshments are served.

How: An accessible location is donated by the town or a community group. Volunteers from local high schools and from the town's older population help the council staff the Stop-By.

What: FESTIVAL OF THE CHILDREN

Who: A week-long festival is celebrated along the town's main street. Council members, particularly the children, ask for aid from town authorities and local merchants. During the week, children's art is displayed in shop windows, special activities take place on the town-hall green after school, the library features storytelling, and street signs and banners decorate the town. On Sunday, part of the main street is closed to allow for a day-long celebration featuring children and adults working and playing together through music, the arts, drama, poetry, dancing, and singing.

How: Council members seek the cooperation of the town council, police department, and library, and approach the merchants' association and/or individual business people to support the Festival. Local musicians, artists, clowns, and jugglers volunteer their time to help children prepare. The council organizes all the activities, invites local leaders to participate in the Sunday celebration, and produces the event.

Dorothy Hughes, executive director of the Mental Health Association of Marin, has been with the organization for 18 years. Ms. Hughes taught in Sacramento, California's neighborhood youth corps before moving to Marin County in 1969. She has raised eight children.

**AT CLOSE
RANGE
Community-
based Groups
Are Better
Equipped to
Help Dropouts**

by Tom Pendleton

The DOME Project is a multi-service, community-based youth-service program that, since 1973, has been deeply involved in educating youngsters on the junior-high and intermediate-school level in Manhattan's Community School District 3. DOME, which began as a single-alternative, off-site classroom for five disruptive students, now runs three alternative classrooms for some 50 students. DOME is based on the premise that young people will not choose lives of crime, welfare dependency, poverty, or drug abuse if they are presented with positive alternatives. In the broadest sense, the goal of DOME is to help the neediest youngsters develop a sense of themselves as individuals who can succeed within our society. To achieve this purpose, the DOME staff works to develop youngsters' academic and social skills, to provide them with opportunities to use their skills, and to help them locate employment and higher educational opportunities.

Addressing the Causes of Youth Crime discusses two recent DOME projects.

Inviting community-based organizations to work with the board of education to solve truancy and dropout problems is a major focus of New York City's dropout prevention program. As a veteran staff member of community-based organizations, I find it rewarding that the board recognizes the valuable role of community-based programs in dealing with the dropout prevention problem (and in many other areas as well). Community-based programs have a greater flexibility of staffing and scheduling, strong roots in the community, and a well-established network of resources with which they are accustomed to working.

For the past five years, DOME has provided truancy prevention services to students of the district's four middle schools, with the help of VISTA workers and a combination of city, state, and foundation support. Therefore, DOME was a natural place for the board of education to turn when funding became available to contract with local organizations to provide truancy prevention services to their middle schools. District 3, one of five school districts of the city's 32, was chosen for this experimental program. This program is just one example of the services provided by community-based organizations. DOME has teamed up with the Rheedlen Foundation, another community-based organization in District 3 that focuses on the problems of truancy prevention, to provide services to 600 youngsters deemed at risk of dropping out before high school graduation. (600 students represent nearly 25 percent of the district's middle-school population.) Students are chosen for the program based on poor attendance, a high number of courses failed, and reading and math levels more than two years below grade level.

Community organizations provide two full-time family workers in each of District 3's four middle schools. They work with a half-time guidance counselor and a teacher who is assigned three periods per day to the program. Family workers provide a range of services: individual counseling, home visits, attendance monitoring, and referral to outside services. In addition, the DOME, Rheedlen, and other local organizations are responsible for arranging health services and for helping the youngsters build connections with the high school they will attend.

The Role of the Family Worker

The family workers' tasks are difficult and frustrating. Most of the students they work with face a host of complex problems not easily solved — problems at home directly related to their school performance.

One of our family workers, Lucila Velez, related the story of her involvement with a Hispanic girl who was frequently absent from school. A home visit revealed that the girl's mother was a junkie and the girl stayed home to care for a younger sister. Late at night, she hung out with older, tough kids on the street. After several home visits, Lucila developed a positive relationship with the girl who began to attend school more frequently. The girl's grades improved, and she successfully graduated from school. The DOME staff also helped arrange a part-time job for her.

Many youngsters in the program were born to teenage parents. Frequently these children have a double set of "guardians," with both parent and grandparent living in the same house. In other cases, children move from one household to the other, with wide gaps in supervision. Family workers work with parents and children to help them set new guidelines. One recent case revealed that a child was traveling some 25 blocks to school, when she had a suitable school about three blocks from home. Every morning the child left for school, but frequently never arrived. She went to a friend's house and watched soap operas all day. The family worker, Edris Hendricks, arranged to have the girl attend the school nearer her home, and advised the mother about her daughter's school attendance. This youngster now knows she cannot continue to fool her mother.

Another student, a 15-year-old male, is one of four children. His 31-year-old mother is on welfare and is overwhelmed with her responsibilities as a parent. The student has become a familiar face in the family workers' office. He has never received so much attention before. Among other things, family workers helped the boy obtain a suitable lunch each day. Because he suffers from food allergies and was unable to eat the school lunches, the staff arranged a small weekly stipend that enables him to purchase his lunches. His school attendance has improved, as has his performance in class.

Many students' problems are not so easily solved. Two young women, Maria and Lynn (not their real names), were fighting at lunchtime several times a week — fights so serious the police were often called. The girls were transferred to the DOME classroom site located several blocks away. Since that time the fights have stopped, but the girls come to school late, return late from lunch, and generally refuse to do any schoolwork. Home visits by the family workers revealed parents who feel they have little control over their children. One child lives with her 30-year-old mother and her mother's mother. The student's mother treats her more like a sister. The other girl's mother is simply not strong enough to force her child to stop her antisocial behavior. These children are in limbo. Family workers have little leverage in such cases where a child very assertively refuses assistance and a parent cannot direct the child's behavior.

In other cases, youngsters reach out to our staff. A student visited the family workers' office and told Algerea Council, "I just need to know that you will be here. Everything is just too much for me sometimes." This student lives with his mother. His father's new wife has her own family. He very much wants to spend time with his father, but his father doesn't feel comfortable calling the former wife's home, because she fights and rants about child support. When the boy calls his father, the new wife is resentful, saying that the father has a new family he should be more concerned about. Algerea has made several attempts to meet with the mother to make arrangements for the

boy to spend more time with his father. To date, the mother has not been available. Algerea and the staff are available to the student and continue attempts to modify the situation.

Long-term Support Within the Community

As these stories reveal, family workers face a variety of broad social problems. At the very least, most students need a personal connection with someone at school who they feel is truly concerned about them as individuals. The initial job of family workers is to develop such a relationship. They can then begin to provide access to other resources: enrolling youngsters in an after-school program with recreation and homework help, assisting youngster in finding part-time jobs, helping solve family problems, arranging for medical attention, or helping the family make connections with social services. DOME's dropout prevention program will operate during the summer, so that the painstakingly built ties will not be broken. The staff is arranging for summer jobs, scholarships to camps, internships, and their own program for 12- to 15-year-olds.

The DOME Project and the Rheedlen Foundation will be part of the community for years to come, even if the board of education does not continue to help youngsters with their various problems. This community presence is one of the strongest arguments for the board to contract with community-based organizations.

Reprinted from *Youth Policy*, June 1986.

The DOME Project The AD-HOC Committee Against Crack

In response to the growing epidemic of drug dealing and drug use, in particular the selling and using of crack among young people on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, West Side youth programs, community and block associations, and ordinary citizens have banded together to focus attention on the problem.

The goal of the coalition was to focus on three areas: 1) diminish the availability of drugs; 2) prevent and educate young people who are not yet involved in drug use; and 3) let the public know where services are available and if services are not available, work with public officials and foment public opinion to fund services.

The staffs of three community youth programs called together other community agencies, elected officials, tenants' associations, block associations, police departments, clergy, and interested individuals. We had three or four large meetings (25-35 people attending and a dozen or so smaller planning meetings). We organized one large planning meeting at a local elementary school. We ran a training session with volunteers from a local drug rehab program for some teenage summer workers. We helped bring the problem to the attention of local elected officials.

We succeeded in reducing the number of drug sellers in the immediate neighborhood, because of the constant attention of the local police. We, as community social service providers, improved our knowledge and contacts with service providers, which helped us increase the number of referrals to treatment programs.

We are still meeting and working with other coalitions and concerned groups to address the problem of crack in our community.

Tom Pendleton, executive director, started as a volunteer tutor at Dome in 1978. He served as coordinator of a youth employment program and as assistant director before his 1984 appointment as executive director.

GETTING IT TOGETHER

by Fred Persily

Commitment

"Some of the crime prevention programs in this journal are good, but what we need in my community is.... We could really make some progress if 'they' would only use my idea."

You are not alone in having an idea that will work to prevent crime and make your community more liveable. Talk to almost any police officer, teacher, or counselor and you will probably hear a good idea for preventing crime. But, it is one thing to have an idea, and another to convert it into a working program. The purpose of this article is to help you turn your idea into action.

The first step is to convince yourself that your idea is a good one and worth your time to develop. A quick way to judge the value of your idea is to explain it to someone who understands why it is as important to prevent crime as it is to apprehend criminals. He or she may agree or disagree with your idea or make suggestions for improving it. When you think your idea is a good one and something you want to make happen, you have taken the biggest step toward doing something about it. The next step is to formulate a strategy for implementing your idea and for gaining support in making it happen. Many people you approach at this stage, or later on in the process, will want to see something in writing. Therefore, a good approach to developing your strategy is to put your idea in writing.

PLAN OF ACTION

Defining the Problem

Ideas are most often the results of our being consciously or subconsciously bothered by a problem that we want to see resolved. Although the problem may be obvious to you, it may not be as clear to someone else. Simply stating the problem and expecting everyone to agree with you usually doesn't work. For example, if you state the problem as being the abuse of drugs in high school, the principal might say that drug abuse is no more than expected and everything possible is being done. Give evidence that the problem you are defining is real and needs to be addressed. If the severity of drug abuse in the high school can be substantiated with arrest statistics, teacher reports, or personal stories by students or parents, the problem becomes real: it can no longer be ignored.

Describing Your Idea

State your idea simply. Your reader must understand the connection between the problem and your idea. What may be obvious to you may seem senseless to someone else. For example, if you propose an after-school athletic program to deal with drug abuse at the high school, your problem description needs to show a clear connection between the lack of after-school activities and why students abuse drugs. Not everyone knows that the absence of after-school activities may contribute to students' drug abuse.

Gauging Your Support

You have some help, if people agree with your assessment of the problem and your idea for responding to it. Listing your potential supporters will help you formulate your plan. Make some phone calls to find out who is willing to work to make your idea happen. Explore the kinds of things they are willing to do. Will students support the idea? What about church, law enforcement, and school administrators; elected officials, business, labor?

Assessing The Obstacles

Next, examine who or what is going to be in the way. Perhaps the high school coach is afraid that attention being given to drug abuse will cause some unfair criticism of the team. The school administrator may not want the school board to think that problems are not handled well on campus. Did you uncover unexpected opposition when you called for support? Often, the only obstacle is lack of money.

Designing The Strategy

Now is the time to think about how you can use your identified resources. If your idea is to set up an after-school athletic program to reduce drug abuse, for example, you may want to get students, clergy, parents, and so on to lobby the school board to make facilities available. You may want to get the fire department, police department, or churches to recruit volunteer after-school athletic supervisors. Whatever your strategy is, design it as a series of steps on the way to implementing the idea. Ideally, someone will assume responsibility for assuring that each step is completed by an agreed-upon deadline. You or someone else who understand the strategy should be responsible for keeping everyone to his or her commitment. Few plans go like clockwork. Be ready to be flexible and to alter your plans to attain your objective. Probably the most difficult part is maintaining your initial enthusiasm.

Funds

If money is needed to make your idea work, prepare a budget detailing personnel and non-personnel costs. When you know your costs, look at your funding options. One method for designing a financial strategy is to explore local options first. Ask yourself these questions:

1. Can the idea be implemented without money if volunteers are forthcoming?
2. Can a business or local supporter be asked to cover the costs?
3. Can the idea be self-supporting through ticket sales or some other fee-for-service option, so that a loan is all that is needed?
4. Is there enough support for the project to generate local government funding or a combination of public and private support?
5. Should a foundation be approached? If so, determine what will happen if funding stops after the program begins. Can this program be self-sufficient, or will it always be dependent on philanthropy?
6. If public grants are involved, they are subject to political decisions that often have no relation to the value of the project. Can you work with funds that may be curtailed because of a governmental decision made a thousand miles away? Also, are you prepared to do the necessary paperwork?

Again, list the steps needed to execute your financial strategy. The person responsible for each task should be identified, and a time frame should be adopted.

You may need help with proposal writing or fundraising. Universities often depend on research grants for a bulk of their support and may be able to suggest someone to help. Foundations may provide you with some planning funds, so you can hire someone to help you get support. Your school, police department, or other public agency may offer some help. Many libraries are repositories for reference literature on foundations; a librarian may be able to help you identify suitable foundations.

Turning an idea for preventing crime into reality may seem like a lot of work. But if you have a solution to a community problem and shy away from acting on it, haven't you become part of the "they" who should do something about it? A major project of the Human Rights Resource Center is to help resolve problems relating to human rights issues in law enforcement and education. If your idea falls into these categories, you can get help simply by calling us and taking that first step.

Fred Persily is a program design and fundraising consultant based in Marin County. He has worked extensively with the San Francisco Foundation and for the State of California Governor's Task Force on Civil Rights. Mr. Persily is the Human Rights Resource Center's former project coordinator.